

2015-K124

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the George F. Johnson Memorial Library

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across the great State of New York is reflective of certain exemplary institutions whose purpose is dedicated to serving the community and the needs of its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the George F. Johnson Memorial Library; and

WHEREAS, The Endicott Free Library was first opened on March 16, 1915, in the Mattoon Hotel building on Washington Avenue by a group of 40 residents who raised the necessary funds to establish a free library association; and

WHEREAS, Headed by a board of seven trustees, its first annual meeting was held at Union-Endicott High School on January 11, 1916, and the circulation for the first nine months of operation was 24,493 books; and

WHEREAS, During this time, many residents of Endicott's north side were immigrants and skilled craftsmen employed in the tanneries and factories of the Endicott-Johnson Corporation; in an effort to serve the north side, the library started one of the Northeast's first bookmobiles in 1916; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous direction of its first Librarian, Margery Quigley, the library and bookmobile earned such enthusiastic support, the library Board of Trustees approved the construction of a new library on the north side to serve its population; and

WHEREAS, This first library on Washington Avenue closed on September

6, 1918, when the library moved to larger quarters, the Ideal Home Library, in the former Harlow E. Bundy residence; and

WHEREAS, The Ideal Home was donated for use as a library by George F. Johnson, and was incorporated under the laws of New York State and governed by a board of trustees; its first librarian was Anna Hall, and during this time it was estimated that nearly 50 percent of the community benefited from Endicott's two libraries; and

WHEREAS, The name of the library was changed to the Endicott Public Library in 1938, when the village purchased both the main and branch facilities from the Endicott-Johnson Corporation; the library remained at the Bundy site until 1950; and

WHEREAS, The Hillside Center was built as a library and community center for north side residents on Odell Avenue as a result of the popularity of the traveling book truck instituted in 1916, from the Endicott Free Library located on Washington Avenue; and

WHEREAS, This library was first opened on March 2, 1920, and more than 500 people attended its opening; with English, cooking and sewing classes, as well as both a boys and girls pre-school, a reading club, and a Girl Scout Troop, the branch became a true community center; and

WHEREAS, The Hillside Center continued to provide valuable services to the residents of the north side with books, records, reference service, children's story hours, films and meeting rooms until its closing on August 31, 1968; and

WHEREAS, In 1950, the village acquired the George F. Johnson homestead on Park Street, built in 1903, for use as a public library; on October 9, 1951, the library was dedicated to the memory of this great industrialist by his daughter; and

WHEREAS, The George F. Johnson Library was under the direction of Beatrice E. Scott, who entered into Endicott Library service on September 1, 1936; she was a pioneer in making film and record collections available for patron use, and was also instrumental in the planning for

the present library building which opened in 1967; and

WHEREAS, The present library was opened to the public on September 25, 1967, and was formally dedicated on October 21, 1967; the new library was designed to hold 50,000 volumes, doubling the capacity from the 28,464 volumes in the original homestead; and

WHEREAS, Today, housing more than 80,000 volumes, the George F. Johnson Library also offers a large magazine collection, DVDs, music on compact disc, a large-print collection and audio-books; its expert staff features six professionals holding Master's degrees in Library and Information Science, and two library assistants with many years of experience; and

WHEREAS, The children's room is inviting and spacious, and holds story hours and special programs at various times throughout the year; its children's book collection is the largest in the Four County system, and recent innovations include personal computers with software chosen for children from pre-school through junior high, and additional Internet access; and

WHEREAS, A Public Computing Center (PCC) on the second floor provides digital literacy education to the community, and features videoconferencing equipment; interactive smartboards are available in the PCC as well as in the basement meeting room, and the Friends of the Library book sale is held the first and third Fridays of every month; and

WHEREAS, Steeped in a proud and distinguished history, the George F. Johnson Library may take just pride in its purposeful growth, as it looks forward to continuing to serve the educational, cultural and intellectual needs of the community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the George F. Johnson Memorial Library; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the George F. Johnson Library.